

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment presents the changes above and presents further information as follows.

PENDING CLAIMS

Original Claims 1-11 have been cancelled (without prejudice or disclaimer), and new Claims 12-21 are presented in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment, and are simply refocused claims in which Applicant is presently interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 12-21 will be pending for consideration and examination in this application.

Applicant respectfully notifies the Office that a Supplemental Preliminary Amendment containing additional claims for consideration and examination in this case will be timely filed.

CLAIMS FOR PRIORITY UNDER §§119 AND 120

Applicant has amended the specification to identify all of the prior applications upon which domestic benefit is claimed in the present application under §120. Written acknowledgment of the claim under §120 is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicant claims foreign priority under §119 of JP 8-097993 filed 19 April 1996, the certified copy of which was filed 18 April 1997 in prior Application No. 08/844,431 (upon which domestic benefit under §120 has been claimed). Written acknowledgment of the completion of requirements under §119 (and 37 CFR §1.55) for Applicant's foreign claim for priority under §119 is respectfully requested.

ASSIGNEE OF ENTIRE INTEREST

HITACHI, LTD. is Assignee of entire right, title and interest in and to the present continuation application by virtue of the Assignment filed in prior Application No. 08/844,431 (upon which domestic benefit under §120 is claimed) and recorded 18 April 1997 at Reel 8526, Frames 0568 *et seq.*

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the local D.C. area number of 703-312-6600, to discuss an Examiner's Amendments or other suggested action for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, *i.e.*, Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

This Preliminary Amendment is being submitted concurrently with the above application, and is therefore timely. Further, no additional claim fees are necessary for entry of this paper. Please charge any actual fees due in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment to ATSK Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (as Case No. 500.35360CX2).

Respectfully submitted,



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